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APPLICATION

FOR A

MCKENZIE CHARTER SCHOOL

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

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University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy

submitted to

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by

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CHARTER APPLICATION: PART I

1. Mission Statement

The core philosophy of the School is to honor and respect the child and his innate ability to learn, his instinctive curiosity to explore the world, his ready impulse to be creative, and his natural capability to solve problems. School should be a continuation of the kind of learning a child has engaged in since birth and a preparation for his role as a lifelong learner in the larger community of the world after school. Educational reformers from Montessori to Howard Gardner have helped us understand how children learn and a McKenzie Charter School intends to incorporate their insights. The distinctive contribution of our school would be to provide a working model in two areas: 1) the application to an academic setting of family education principles that empower children; and 2) an integrated cross-cultural curriculum that requires children to function in three languages.

The impetus for a McKenzie Charter School derives from our foundation's work in family education and the profound benefits achieved in children's lives when parents learn how to foster trust, self-motivation, and responsibility instead of trying to control children with rules, rewards, fear, and punishment. McKenzie Charter School's faculty and staff would be trained in the principles of Rudolf Dreikurs, Alfred Adler, and Haim Ginott by a selection of their contemporary proponents including Adele Faber, Elaine Mazlish, Jane Nelsen, Barbara Coloroso, and Dr. Timothy Jordan. Parent education classes would be given at the school and parents would be strongly encouraged to attend them. The goal is to harmonize the home and school environments where both are healthy, nurturing, respectful, and stimulating places working together to nourish the child's growth. When either one is out of step or at odds with the other, progress for the child is undermined.

Children in most developed countries of the world become fluent in at least two languages, in Europe often three or more languages. One explanation of why Japanese children spend more hours in school compared to their American counterparts is the necessity to do so in order to read and write the Japanese language, which is considerably more difficult to learn than English. We believe that the discipline and rigor needed to master foreign languages enhance overall cognitive development and carry over into other subjects. A secondary benefit of foreign language acquisition is to get children "out of their skin" and able to experience the perspective of someone different from themselves. The enormous effort needed to learn another language transforms us; it creates a sense of achievement that brings with it understanding and tolerance. We believe barriers between people do not completely disappear as long as language separates them. The traditional thrust of bilingual education in America has been to teach standard English to those who do not know it. Although a necessary and worthwhile objective, it is wrongfully one-sided and imbalanced. Americans should be learning the language of immigrants while teaching them English. We envision a school

where Spanish-speaking Latinos or Chinese-speaking Asian Americans will be considered an asset, not a liability. We envision a school where everyone--teachers and students alike--are struggling together to learn how to be trilingual. We should do this because it is respectful, because it will foster world peace, because it is necessary for the next generation to compete effectively in the global economy, and, above all, because it will enhance learning, especially what we can learn from other cultures.

Why have we selected these two emphases? We believe they are two of the most important means to achieve the goal of education: bringing forth a generation of fully functioning, happy, healthy, contributing members of society equipped to handle the challenges and problems of the twenty-first century. The jury is still out on what, if any, of the elements of educational reform--school autonomy, experiential learning, the value of diversity, authentic learning, alternative assessment, recognition of learning styles and multiple intelligences, accelerated learning, cooperative learning, community service, school partnerships with business and universities--will bring this outcome to pass. We believe success will come to those who focus on the right activities, pick enabling vehicles, and, above all, perform them well--with flexibility, understanding, and contagious excitement.

When there is a crisis, people at the top often do not know exactly what is causing the problem. The response is often to institute a number of random changes in the hope that something will work. In business or in education, this can be a costly approach. One must know what is causing the problem in order to fix it and maintain success for the future. The purpose of the McKenzie Charter School is to create a fantastic learning environment that works and to understand why it is working. Even the right idea poorly executed will fail. And a bad model with terrific students and teachers will succeed. We at the McKenzie Foundation know a lot about how to treat children well. We know less about how to instruct foreign languages. Having studied immersion, submersion, and bilingual education programs in Canada and elsewhere, we found none problem-free. While building on their success, we believe we must invent a new and better way. This will entail some experimenting, but when we succeed, we will know why.

These two emphases are not the only means to achieve our educational goal. The following are underlying beliefs and guiding principles that will inform a McKenzie Charter School.

- a. Education should be conducted in a democratic, nurturing climate, not in an authoritarian, rigid, top-down system. Students, parents, and teachers should share the decision-making power. Although freedom governs feelings and verbal expressions, behaviors have limits to preserve physical safety, health, and the social well-being of the community. Students and teachers define the social expectations and consequences of violations. The primary unit of problem-solving

and discipline will be the daily class meeting. Problems that cannot be handled successfully in class meetings are sent to the Judicial Committee, composed of faculty and students, before final adjudication by the Board of Trustees in the eventuality of expulsion. Students formally evaluate teachers and have an input in the hiring of faculty. Students exercise choice in approximately half of the curriculum. Rules that take away the rights of children should not be made; rules should not be made for the convenience of adults in anticipation of hypothetical, future problems. Each child is encouraged and enabled to take responsibility for himself, his conduct, and his learning.

b. Mistakes are expected and welcomed as opportunities to learn. Learning involves taking cognitive risks. Good judgment and wisdom, just like arithmetic and reading, require practice to perfect. No child should ever experience humiliation when he fails at a learning task. Mistakes should be anticipated and the important role that teachers play is twofold: 1) learning from the mistake, and 2) encouragement. Mistakes are valued as the principal way we as human beings learn.

c. Schools should be places where the love of learning is experienced. All too often schools are places where teachers and students alike experience anger, frustration, resentment, and boredom. We believe that a system set up to control and manipulate children with an eye to social conformity, behavior modification and following directions is a system that no one can learn to love. Even those students who succeed at school often feel too much anxiety and stress, particularly about grades. Schools are systems of conditional approval that create a dependency on others for self-esteem, meaning, and acceptance; they should reflect unconditional love and support. It is no wonder, then, that those who succeed often care more about grades than learning and those who fail act out low self-esteem in rebellion. The fault lies in a system that does not cultivate inner sources of motivation and approval. Achieving self-motivation in learning is as crucial as self-discipline in behavior. How does one achieve this? The good news is that children already possess these inner resources. Schools simply must not destroy them. As with physicians, primum non nocere.

d. Students should be allowed to experience the consequences of their decisions whenever possible. Teachers should never do for children what they can do for themselves. Included in the universe of necessary learning experiences are: confidence, courage, failure, belonging, significance, compassion, and cooperation.

e. Education should focus on learning, not teaching. Traditionally, teachers tell children how to do something, expect them to memorize it, and then test them by asking them to repeat the process or provide the one right answer to a question or example formulated by the teacher or text. Since this a comfortable way of teaching and a poor way of learning, the process must be repeated and reviewed often in order to achieve even temporary learning

outcome. We believe the job of a teacher is to inspire students to want to make the effort needed to learn. When this happens, learning takes place quickly and efficiently. There are as many possible ways to do this as there are individual children, but three broad categories are worth mentioning: 1) modeling the learning process; 2) connecting the skill to an experiential activity; and 3) presenting skills and information in the context of meaning.

Teachers must model the process and values of a nurturing education. Children learn by imitation; they learn more from what we do than what we say. Teachers must model mutual respect, problem-solving, social responsibility, curiosity, honesty, empathy, and unconditional acceptance of feelings and ideas. They should articulate how they engage in critical inquiry, experience the consequences of their choices, take appropriate risks, and learn from their mistakes so that children may do likewise. If a teacher does not consider learning a passion--thrilling, vital, and as necessary as food and air in his own life--then he should not be a teacher in a McKenzie Charter School. Teachers will be expected to use the autonomy and freedom given them to convey their passion for learning, to be creative, to inspire learning, and to respond to individual needs of each student.

The role of experience is central to the learning process. Although there are many arresting points of departure for learning--such as a question, a puzzle, a shocking observation, humor--perhaps the most compelling motivation to learn comes when a child desires to do something that requires a certain skill or knowledge. The curriculum at the McKenzie Charter School will provide many opportunities for real-world activities that require academic skills and knowledge.

Skills and information should not be acquired without regard for meaning. Students should be encouraged to challenge stereotypical thinking, to probe and question authority, to ask difficult questions, and to gain an understanding of who they are and what their strengths and biases are, as well as to forge a meaningful and coherent view of the world, the human condition, and their role in it.

f. Education should encourage win-win situations and not be viewed as a zero sum game where one person's success depends on someone else's failure. Grades and assessment are primarily tools to provide feedback to the student and the teacher in order to improve the learning process. Students should grade themselves and discuss any discrepancies in perceptions between student and teacher's assessment of progress. The meaning of grades should be clearly articulated and put in perspective in a context where fear and feelings of inadequacy and discouragement are no longer part of the learning process. Students do not feel good about

themselves because adults tell them to; students possess good self-esteem when they have experienced the successful struggle for competence and when they are surrounded by adults who treat them with respect and dignity.

2. School Objectives

A. The McKenzie Charter School's broad academic objectives are for students to learn many skills, to be exposed to a broad range of information, to discover where their individual strengths lie, to exercise creativity, to strive for excellence, and to increase in competence to the fullest measure of their abilities. The academic program will be flexible in order to allow students to pursue individual passions, to set their own pace for learning in some subjects, to get involved with independent study and off-site learning experiences, to combine academic learning with real-world applications. Although we support many of the principles of a totally unstructured curriculum like Sudbury Valley School, we do have some structure because we believe that education left completely to the self-direction of young children will not be as fruitful and rewarding an experience as a program with some requirements and daily, formal interaction of students and teachers. We believe in a baseline standard with regard to content from which students can exercise choice. To be an informed, functioning citizen in a complex, modern world, children should take away from the 12 years dedicated to learning a considerable repertoire of skills, information, and the ability to access, process, synthesize, and use that knowledge. The problem as we see it is that the system of power and control in traditional schools causes children to learn, along with knowledge, many dysfunctional attitudes and beliefs about themselves and about learning that lead to resentment and discouragement. Also, the rigid and formulaic process of teaching and testing in traditional schools rewards memorization and calculation at the expense of creative thinking and originality. We want to achieve learning outcomes equal to the best of traditional schools without incurring any of the damage inherent in existing educational models.

B. We want students to emerge from the McKenzie Charter School able to resolve conflict through individual or group problem-solving. We want students to experience and appreciate cultures different from their own. We want students to acquire self-knowledge and confidence that they can accomplish anything they want to do or know. We want students to grow wise in their choices and decisions, as they assume more and more control over their lives and learning. We want students to feel unconditional acceptance and from that security discover empathy for others. We want students to perform and receive acts of kindness. We want students to learn how to express anger in non-violent ways. We want students to define their own highly-developed (in the Kohlberg sense) code of values and ethics and to tolerate those whose value judgments differ from their own. We want students to develop healthy personalities. We want students to become caring human beings.

C. We want students to understand that with freedom comes responsibility and to develop the habit of exercising responsibility. We want students to experience the sense of belonging to a community outside the family and to use that strength as springboard for participation in the larger community beyond the school. We want the community of the school to be a place where people help one another and see each other as valuable resources with worthwhile ideas and abilities. We want students to understand that although differences distinguish us from one another, we are united by a common humanity. We want students to encounter and emulate adults who are committed to an active life of thought and inquiry.

The school will live its commitment to environmental concerns and everyone will participate in the recycling center. Projects that reuse rather than recycle will be explored, e.g. using old paint to marble paper. To the degree possible, science courses will involve students in the science of the recycling processes. From these activities, students will learn that recycling means more than sorting trash. To the degree possible, small-scale farming will occur to give the students an opportunity to grapple firsthand with environmental issues, e.g. chemical versus biological pest control, renewability of soil, and the effects of pollution.

The school will be open at night and offer a variety of community education programs, from parent education to language and computer courses. Where appropriate, students may be involved in these courses and observe that education is a lifelong pursuit and school a community resource.

3. Statement of Need

All institutions need periodic revitalization. The institutions involved in public education are no exception. Evidence exists that many schools are not serving students, teachers, or society well. Bureaucracy, ossification, and entrenched interests impede innovation from within. New ideas, whether in business or education, take root best in small, entrepreneurial settings. The concept of the McKenzie Charter School entails a new way of teaching; retraining teachers in an existing public system would be a massive task. Schools are reluctant to commit to change without demonstrated success. Many efforts are underway to improve public schools, but for the most part the changes are incremental, not radical. Hardly any schools are willing to risk empowering students. To meet the needs of the next century, we do not need to reinvent the wheel in education; we need to invent the airplane.

Few voices for educational reform call for educating Americans in the multitude of world cultures to the degree we envision; none that I know of aim for trilingual students. This is an experiment long overdue. The history of integration and busing in this country has taught us that just putting children in physical proximity does not erase racial tensions. If we are to have peace,

we must figure out a way for children to live and learn together. We cannot afford to ignore any plausible proposal that offers the hope of greater racial harmony.

B. Excellent schools exist in America, but all too many of them are private schools, available only to children whose families can afford them. We want to capture some of the best thinking and assemble the best teaching for students of all economic means. Children come to school with enormously varied ability levels and degrees of preparation that reflect in large measure their home environments. Yet schools all too often treat students as if there were no differences and expect children to march to the same curricular beat and tune. Anything that offers more variety in educational options for public schools will meet individual needs better than the current system. As a recent federal Department of Education report indicates, bright children in large numbers are underchallenged in public schools because public education by definition has always aimed for the middle. Charter schools will breathe life into an ailing system: they will attract students unsatisfied with current options and remove entry barriers for talented, non-accredited professionals to teach in the classroom.

4. School Demographics

A & B. We have not yet located a school site. In general, we are looking for a site with the right demographic mix preferably with some open space.

C. Since the school has a strenuous foreign language commitment, we will work with researchers in the field of language acquisition to create a test that would determine foreign language aptitude and facility. Ideally we would like to have some portion of the school population with native languages other than English, e.g. Spanish-speaking, French-speaking, and Chinese-speaking.

D. The school's anticipated enrollment would be one class of 20 in each grade level from grades 5-12. Depending on demand and available resources, it is likely we would open in 1995 with only grades 5-8 and add one grade 5 each year for the next five years to reach the full complement of 5-12 grades. We feel this staged introduction offers several advantages. First, it would blunt any possible effect of depletion on a single school with only 40 students from elementary and 40 students from junior high levels involved the first year. A phase-in would also allow us to make adjustments and perfect the system with a very manageable number of students--80-- and only slowly work up to 160. If the school were in great demand, we would consider adding a second class per grade level before going to grades 9-12, space permitting.

5. Recruiting & Marketing Plan

We plan on publicizing the school in newspapers, including foreign language newspapers, radios, flyers, as well as conducting

open houses and informational forums where prospective parents and students can visit the school and hear faculty and the Director discuss the school's philosophy and curriculum. In order to reach the non-English speaking populations, we will network with organizations serving those populations, including speaking at meetings.

6. Admissions Policy

Since we wish to ensure a successful fit between the school and the student, we will require the student and his family to attend an informational meeting prior to submitting an application. The application will consist primarily of an essay by the student explaining why he/she wishes to attend the McKenzie Charter School and a letter of recommendation from the current fourth grade teacher. Because the school has a demanding foreign language component, in order to measure the student's likelihood of succeeding at the school, we will administer as part of the application process tests, including verbal and written foreign language proficiency (in French and Spanish) and foreign language aptitude tests. Group interviews will be part of the application process in addition to tests to determine eligibility. We would like not to exclude anyone who could be served by the school's special focus. Preference, by mandate, will be given to residents in the town or city where the school is located and in subsequent years to siblings of current students. If there are more qualified applicants than spaces, a lottery will be held among local residents. If the applications are not an even distribution by sex, two separate lotteries will be created, one for boys and one for girls in order to ensure that there is not an overwhelming preponderance of one sex.

7. Profile of Founding Coalition

The McKenzie Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that has made parent education and domestic violence prevention two of its major priorities is applying for the charter school. The following group of friends are working together in support of the foundation's application:

Janet Rich, President, McKenzie Foundation, A.B., M.A., Ph.D., M.B.A.,
Harvard University

Robert Whittemore, Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology,
Lewis & Clark College, Founder and Director, Fir Acres Workshop
in Writing and Thinking, A.B. Harvard, M.A., Ph.D., UCLA

Elizabeth Whittemore, writer/playwright, A.B. Harvard, M.F.A. Goddard

Paul Gutmann, Manager, Water Treatment Plant, Lake Placid, NY,
B.S. Syracuse University

As parents and educators, all four have struggled to find schools that met their high expectations for children's learning environments. Peace Corps experience in South America and Africa were formative

influences in their lives. All have lived in foreign countries since then and felt the longlasting impact of encounters with foreign cultures. Janet Rich has recently spent two years living in Great Britain and two years in Canada. All have teaching experience and a commitment to cross-cultural investigation in the pursuit of a more humane world.

Paul Gutmann, who has founded an Electronics and Aviation Club at the elementary and junior high level, will act as catalyst for science curriculum design. He has also started and served as coach of an Odyssey of the Mind team. Robert Whittemore will be instrumental in creating the curriculum for the Comparative Culture courses at the school and will be on the school's faculty. Janet Rich will be responsible for overall curriculum development, in particular development of cases used for the Critical Thinking courses.

A partial list of other educators who will be consulted as advisors include:

Alex Packer, former director of the Parkmount School in Washington, D.C.
Gil Leaf, former director of Children's Museum, LA, and former Headmaster, the Tower School
Professor Iwasaki, Japanese Studies, University of Calif., Santa Barbara
Roger Owen, history professor (Arab world), Harvard
David Perkins/Howard Gardner, Co-Directors, Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education
Seymour Papert, MIT professor (computers)
Robert Sternberg, Yale professor (creativity)
Molly Fripp, former Headmistress, Miss Edgars & Miss Cramps School, Montreal
Leon Lederman, Director and Founder, Teacher's Academy for Mathematics and Science, Chicago
Henry Levin, Stanford professor (accelerated learning)
Wayne Cornelius, Director, The Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, San Diego
Marc Shell, Harvard professor, Comparative Literature
George Wood, Director, Institute for Democratic Education, Ohio

C. We plan to recruit at least two more organizers who will be native speakers of French and Spanish. We also would like to involve Dr. Ron David, a black pediatrician and lecturer in public policy at the Kennedy School of Government, who is a keen proponent of community wellness.

8. Timetable

By June 1994	Recruitment of additional organizers
By September 1994	Fundraising for start-up costs and appointment of Director
By November 1994	Site Selection
By December 1994	Completion of curriculum
By March 1995	Hiring of faculty
By April 1995	Publicity, recruitment, and selection of students

By June 1995 Completion of any renovation, installation
 of equipment, library, and preparation of
 the site; state and municipal approvals

By July 1995 Completion of teacher training

B. No feasibility of a start in 1994.

CHARTER APPLICATION: PART II

9. Evidence of Support

A. Since we have not yet identified the site for the school, it is impossible to demonstrate community backing for a charter school in a given location.

B. We propose to look at several factors in site selection:

- 1) non-English speaking populations; 2) population growth;
- 3) building availability; and 4) community support.

10. Educational Program

The educational program consists of required courses and a number of electives from which students can fulfill overall educational requirements. A portion of each day is left unscheduled to allow for independent study, work on school committees, work on special school projects, field trips, or approved off-site instruction.

The morning schedule contains a four-hour block of instruction devoted to: 1) Primary Foreign Language; 2) Comparative Cultures; 3) Critical Thinking, which alternates with 4) Writing Skills. The faculty of these courses work as a team and the allocation of time among the courses varies depending on need. The Writing Skills class totally supports the other classes. Students learn grammar, mechanics, usage, vocabulary, research skills, composition, and editing as they fulfill assignments in Critical Thinking and Comparative Cultures (and occasionally other courses).

In grades 5-8 the primary foreign language studied will be French. Each year American history, government, literature, art, and culture will be studied in comparison with a foreign culture and the history of interconnections will be explored. In grades 5-8 the cultures studied will be: 1) Great Britain and the Commonwealth; 2) Japan; 3) Canada and the French influence in North America; 4) Africa and the Arab world. In grades 7 and 8 the Comparative Cultures and Critical Thinking course will be taught in both languages and students will be expected to read and write assignments and converse in both English and French. In addition to the French, which will be studied intensively for four years, students will study one year of Japanese during the sixth grade and one year of Arabic during the eighth grade.

In grades 9-12 the primary foreign language studied will be Spanish. The foreign cultures studied will be: 1) ancient and modern Greece and Rome; 2) China; 3) Mexico and the Spanish influence in North America; and 4) Germany and Russia. In grades 11 and 12 the Comparative Cultures and Critical Thinking courses will be taught in both languages and students will be expected to read and write assignments and converse in both English and Spanish. In addition to Spanish, which will be studied intensively for four years, students will study one year of Latin or Greek in ninth grade, Chinese in tenth grade, and German or Russian in twelfth

Full-time faculty who are not fluent in the primary foreign languages (French and Spanish) are required to take the primary foreign language courses along with the students and to learn the special vocabulary of their areas of instruction. Every student will have the opportunity to spend at least a week on one school-financed trip to a French-speaking country and one trip to a Spanish-speaking country during vacations. Students may pay to go on additional trips as they are scheduled. The intention is to create an authentic reason for learning the foreign languages and to create a trilingual community among students and faculty. By offering English, French, Spanish, and selected other languages to parents and the larger community in the evenings, we hope to extend the boundaries of a trilingual community beyond the school.

The Critical Thinking course is taught totally by the case method. Classes are conducted principally in Socratic dialogue. Case subjects come from current events, environmental issues, politics, ethics, history of science, literary criticism, business, economics, logic, and film analysis. The focus is on the process of thinking, analysis, and critical inquiry.

The afternoon schedule contains electives and required math. We recognize that math differs from other subject areas because learning is sequential, not iterative. Mastery of one level is required before one can progress to the next. Due to this unique feature, math learning is particularly ill-suited to traditional methods of instruction in prescribed blocks at a prescribed pace. A great deal of time is spent in repetition and review for slow learners and children are shamed if they do not understand as quickly as others. On the other hand, quick learners are bored with material that they already know. In order to maximize each child's potential and to avoid any feelings of inadequacy, math will be taught totally in tutorial. Each child progresses at his own maximum pace without unnecessary review. We expect all children to reach a level at least through algebra and many to progress through college calculus under this system. Students are required to have three half-hour tutorials in math per week. In the fifth grade these are individual tutorials and from sixth grade on at the teacher's discretion students can be combined into small groups of three or four with homogeneous skill levels and rate of progress. Students are required to take math in every grade from 5-12.

Science is taught totally by electives organized by topic rather than by subject. Examples of topics include: Light, Magnetism, Plants, Engines, Earthquakes/Volcanoes, Tree Identification, Dissection, The Human Body, Water Pollution, Diseases, Plant Reproduction, Electronics, Aviation, Photography, Optics, Auto Mechanics, Celestial Navigation, Emergency First Aid, The Cell, The Atom, and The Theory of Relativity. Students will be required to select from these minicourses, which are taught in four-week increments (i.e. 4, 8 or 12 weeks), the equivalent of at least three years of science in grades 5-8 and three years in grades 9-12. Three different levels of difficulty (I, II, or III) help student

select. Introductory courses cover the fundamentals of biology, chemistry, physics, geology, health, electronics, and astronomy. Students wishing to study science in depth, or a particular branch of science, will be permitted to do so. Science classes in the middle school include mixed grades from 5-8, although realistically most introductory courses will have fifth and sixth graders and higher level courses will have seventh and eighth graders predominantly. A similar distribution will occur in the high school grades 9-12.

In order to graduate students must be able to read music and play an instrument at the intermediate level. There will also be electives on topics in music and the music teacher will participate in school-wide celebrations of cultural holidays and in student-initiated activities like chorus, drama, and Christmas shows. A student may waive the music requirement by passing a test. Individual and group lessons will be required for those who do not pass a test. Part-time faculty and outside music schools will be used to teach instruments other than piano.

A variety of art electives will be taught by part-time faculty and in conjunction with outside organizations and institutions. Assorted sports will constitute electives. The focus on sports is acquiring a lifetime habit of physical activity. Instruction will be available in: tennis, boating, swimming, ice skating, dance (tap, ballet, hip-hop, modern), cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, aerobics, running, soccer, and baseball.

Literature courses focusing on specific authors and on genres (poetry, biography, autobiography, science fiction, short story, fiction, epistolary novel) will be electives in English and the primary foreign languages.

Faculty-sponsored school projects can be electives, e.g. a school newspaper, tree-house construction, bread-baking, origami, computer database management and online networks like Internet, canoe-building, tepee construction, ham radio, or aquaculture. Parents will be hired as part-time faculty as well as other competent outsiders to offer an elective in an area of interest when appropriate.

B. The primary basis governing teaching methodology is the conviction--backed by research--that students learn best when they are motivated, when they perceive learning as enjoyable and interesting, when they can exercise choice, when instruction is tied to a meaningful activity, and when an enthusiastic adult presents it in a way that allows for discovery and stimulates inquiry. Learning takes place best when the learning process is modeled for children and where recognition of both formal and informal methods of learning occurs. Permanent, longterm learning takes place when children are empowered rather than controlled, propelled from within rather than told to follow directions, allowed to experience consequences and learn from their mistakes and failures without shaming, and are permitted to decide which areas of learning to give their best effort and which areas to give adequate attention. Children learn

best when they are respected and their honest efforts and struggles are acknowledged and appreciated.

A variety of learning formats will be utilized: lectures, discussion, small group projects, tapes, videos, role-playing, exercises, tests. Explicit instruction in study techniques will also be an integral part of instruction: how to take notes, how to summarize, how to study spelling, how to study vocabulary, how to self-test, how to self-edit, how to memorize, how to do homework, how to take a standardized test, how to prioritize time, how to delegate tasks in groups, how to get organized, how to do library research, how to pick a topic. We believe many students suffer from poor learning outcomes because they have never been trained in study techniques. Study technique sessions will be brainstorming sessions where everyone's ideas are acknowledged and a spirit of collaboration is encouraged.

C. The hours of operation for the school will be 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. When students sign in each day, they must also sign up for a chore on the chore list. They must sign when the chore is completed and checked by the assigned checker. Chores must be completed before the end of the school day. Chores are small tasks that contribute to the maintenance of the school and reinforce the sense of community. The chore list also creates an incentive for arriving at the school early. The school will be open in the evenings for adult classes and students may study at the school library in the evenings if they can be picked up by parents. Parents must sign their children out from the library when picking them up.

The school year will begin the first Monday after Labor Day and end in the middle of June. Normal holidays are: Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday), Christmas (2 weeks), New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Spring Break (2 weeks), Memorial Day. The school will also spend a number of in-school days celebrating festivals and celebrations of foreign cultures, e.g. Chinese New Year, Kwanzaa etc. Students entering fifth grade must spend the summer before entering school in an intensive session on writing skills, computer skills, and French. The summer before the ninth grade students must take an intensive course in Spanish. Although these required summer courses are free, there will also be a summer educational camp available for tuition in July and August for those years (6, 7, 8, 10, and 11 grade) when no summer courses are required.

11. Student Performance

A. Courses are graded and tests occur at the teacher's discretion. National standardized tests will be given at the beginning of fifth grade and at selected intervals. With regard to course grades, students will also grade themselves. Both teacher and student must provide a written evaluation of at least a page accompanying the letter grade. Parents, student, and the teachers of the

Primary Foreign Language/Critical Thinking/Comparative Culture team will meet to discuss the evaluations for a meaningful length of time. In courses, tests will try to measure students' understanding of concepts, thought process, and the ability to apply acquired knowledge to new problems rather than just regurgitation of information. In some classes portfolios of student work will be created. For graduation certain skill tests will be given, e.g. music. Teachers are encouraged to schedule a problem-solving session with student and parents whenever necessary.

B. Underperforming students will meet individually with a teacher for discussion and observation in order to diagnose the learning problem. An individualized course of study will be devised to remedy the situation through study skills and special learning strategies. These sessions are respectful and collaborative, not punitive and occur as often as necessary. When a student exhibits sustained lack of effort and deliberate negative learning attitudes, the student will be removed from the class and have sustained discussions with the Director in order to try to understand the source of the anger. To paraphrase Fitzgerald, all happy students are alike, but each unhappy one is different. With listening, creativity, and sensitivity to each individual situation, the Director and student conduct problem-solving sessions until a mutually-satisfactory joint solution is reached and the student is willing to apply himself to learning.

C. Skills will be measured by tests devised to allow students to perform those skills. The danger that must be guarded against is for the desire for assessment to drive the educational objectives toward only those which are simple and easily tested. Complex, creative, and subtle thinking cannot be tested by multiple-choice or fill-in-the blank or one-word answer tests.

12. School Evaluation

A. Student learning outcomes are the most objective measure of performance. The Director is responsible for monitoring teacher effectiveness. Each student grades his teacher and twice yearly parents are requested to fill out an evaluative questionnaire on their child's teachers as well as the school. Teachers meet weekly to discuss problems, receive feedback, and share strategies to improve learning.

B. Three times a year there will be a School Meeting of teachers, students, and parents to discuss a variety of issues and decisions facing the school, from faculty hiring to new courses to capital expenditures. Although the resolutions passed at School Meeting are not binding on the Board of Trustees, they are taken seriously as indication of the collective will. The Director is primarily responsible for community dialogue. Evening courses and weekend parenting courses are a form of community outreach.

13. Human Resource Information

A. The Board of the McKenzie Foundation will hire the Director of the School. In the start-up period, the Director will hire the faculty. Thereafter, the Director, with the advice of the faculty and School Meeting, will recommend to the Board of Trustees new faculty for their approval. The standard for hiring is that the person enjoys being with children, treats children respectfully, is a fantastic teacher, and possesses expertise in and conveys enthusiasm for the subject area. The school recognizes that many individuals without teacher certification fit this description and seeks to incorporate them into the faculty. Prospective faculty members must teach at least one class, which students will be asked to evaluate. The interview process will require in-depth discussions with the Director and faculty. For grades 5-8 the targeted full-time faculty is 8, for grades 9-12 also 8, supplemented by a number of part-time faculty. The relatively low student:teacher ratio (10:1) exists because students will receive individual attention but also because there is virtually no administration besides the Director. Teachers take on non-classroom responsibility through Committees.

B. Teachers will be evaluated by students four times a year. Teachers will be evaluated by the Director twice a year, the end-of-year evaluation tied to the performance bonus. Teachers, like students, will provide self-assessment. The Director will observe each teacher in the classroom at least four times a year. The Board of Trustee members (other than the Director) are responsible for evaluating the Director and sending an annual evaluation to the Board of the McKenzie Foundation. The Director is hired and dismissed by the Board of the McKenzie Foundation, which also determines compensation for the Director. The Director cannot receive a greater salary than the highest paid teacher.

C. Full-time teachers are hired on annual contracts. Salaries are determined by a formula that accounts for age (as a proxy for life experience), educational degrees, and years teaching at the School. Up to 50% of the base salary is available as a performance bonus awarded by the Director. Benefits include paid holidays, no time required in the summer (except for stipulated language instructors and the initial training) unless separately contracted, 5 paid personal days a year, and 80% health care insurance paid. Part-time teachers working less than 25 hours a week have salary and personal days proportional to hours worked with no paid health insurance. Part-time faculty are eligible for performance bonuses. Apprentice teachers get approximately half the base salary of regular teachers and are eligible for performance bonuses. Teachers are required to attend four on-site professional development days a year as well as all School Meetings, which are held in the evenings. They are able to apply for stipends to attend other outside professional conferences or institutes. The Director awards these stipends on an ad hoc basis depending on funds available. Teachers contract separately to teach evening classes, but part-time hours during the day can be combined with

evening hours to qualify for full-time employment.

14. School Governance

A. There are no plans or intentions to contract to an outside group to manage the School. The School does have a relationship with the McKenzie Foundation, which is responsible for fundraising the start-up costs and for the appointment of the Director. All major decisions are controlled by the School's Board of Trustees.

The Director is responsible for daily operational decisions, the evaluation of the faculty, the relationship with the community, chairmanship of the School Meetings, the Annual Report to the Board of Directors of the McKenzie Foundation, reports to the Massachusetts Secretary of Education, coordination of curriculum development with the faculty and Board of Trustees, organizing staff development days, the hiring of non-instructional personnel, supervision of building maintenance, relationships with government regulatory agencies, application for outside funding from state and federal programs, supervision of on-site visits by other schools, and overseeing the operation of Committees and the general running of the School. The Director must also teach at least one course throughout the year.

The first School Meeting of the school year, held shortly after opening, will nominate and elect faculty, parents, and students to the following Committees: Judicial, Financial, Admissions, Parents, Alumni (when needed), Attendance & Registration, Work, Records & Archives, Building & Maintenance, Grounds, Medical, Celebrations & Special Events, Enterprises, Library, and Environment.

B. The first School Meeting also elects four members of the Board of Trustees, two of which must be faculty (one for a two-year term and one for a one-year term) and two of which must be parents (one for a two-year term and one for a one-year term). After the first year all Trustees will be elected for two-year terms, with fifty percent changeover each year. The Director is a member of the Board of Trustees for the duration of his employment as Director.

C/D. The Board of Trustees is responsible for strategic decisions, capital expenditures greater than \$10,000, the hiring and dismissal of faculty, the creation and review of the budget, complaints about the Director, approval of the curriculum, student expulsions, and the general welfare of the School.

E. Parental and student involvement in decision-making occurs principally through the School Meetings and the Committees. Parents, students, and faculty are considered partners in the education process and work together closely.

F. The McKenzie Charter School hopes to be an asset for the community in which it is located. Many school events will be open to the general public, including evening courses. Relations with the public school system will be as cooperative and collegial as we can make them.

15. Building Options

Not available at this time